1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

price at this time of year for nearly everything, including weddings and bride-wealth, goes up.

When all the exchanges are completed everyone participating in a wedding gets some present of money, food, and clothing. The *luwali*, especially at first marriages, gets the bulk of the bridewealth and distributes the rest to the girl's family both on her mother's and her father's side. After the first marriage the girl tends to keep more and more of the bridewealth for herself, giving the *luwali* what amounts to a fee for serving as the official bride-giver. It is also important to note that when there are disputes between a husband and wife, the first person to whom both turn for arbitration is the *luwali*.

The Kanuri think of getting married in several ways. First of all they divide all marriages into first marriages (to take a girl or a small girl), and secondary marriages with a divorced woman (to take a woman or to take a divorced woman). First marriages take place for a girl around the time of puberty, while boys do not marry until they are in their late teens or early twenties, and young men of twenty-eight and twenty-nine who have not yet been married are not hard to find.

An interesting sidelight on marriage with previously unmarried young girls is the ambivalence men feel about it. Men obtain much prestige from such a marriage. But its cost invariably puts a man into great debt, and consummation of the marriage itself, traditionally, is a semi-public affair in which old women related to the girl sit outside the marriage hut and whisper to their newly-wed relative that she must resist the advances of her husband. They do this until very late at night or until they are given some proof of the girl's virginity by the husband. They then make a fearful clatter in the town or village to announce the premarital chastity of their young relative. Standards of personal appearance and sexual attraction are important to Kanuri men and center on more sexually mature women. Such standards deal with hair style, facial symmetry, type of walk, and other physical attributes and skills, as well as ability at wifely chores. None of these attributes are in any degree well-developed among young girls, so that the man must control himself and almost publicly proclaim his manhood and sexual prowess with a young girl who is not defined as sexually exciting by the culture. This causes much anxiety and I have seen men praying almost continually for several weeks in order to gain the strength to carry out a virgin's consummation. It is important to note that when some western educated Kanuri talk about marriage they immediately fasten on this semi-public consummation of the girl's first marriage as a custom that will be dropped in the future, and certainly one they do not intend to carry out or even allow in their lives. From the girl's point of view, as education in western-style schools becomes more common and the length of time in school increases, then the time of first marriage for the girls will move ahead. At present however there are only a handful of Kanuri girls who attend schools beyond the age of traditional marriage.

But what is the basis for the conflict? Why are men willing to suffer to gain such an unattractive wife? Men always explain it in the same way. A young girl has never been touched sexually by other men; he is the first; he can train her as he likes, and teach her to be a proper wife to suit his own personal wishes. Besides, it is a good Muslim custom, they always add, as they do about almost every custom when they are asked. In this case they are correct, for such young marriages are very

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

widespread throughout the Islamic world. However there is more to it than that—indeed it comes close to the heart of the Kanuri way of looking at things. Kanuri social life is a constant search for fruitful social contacts in which one man is the superior and the other a subordinate to him. Between the sexes, the culture defines women as inferior in rank to men. Thus the place universally available to all men for the achievement of subordinates is the family and the household, and the ideal female subordinate is a young girl, one who has not yet been divorced, that is rejected her subordination to her husband, and one whom the husband can train to become properly obedient to his own personal wishes. Thus marriage to a previously unmarried girl symbolizes what every man wants, not sexually, but socially; unblemished and complete obedience from docile subordinates who receive material benefits in return for subordination. Seen in this light the marriage with young girls then becomes more understandable for it represents some of the most profoundly important values in the society.

Most Kanuri do not, however, marry girls who have never been married before. Generally they marry a *zower*—or divorced woman. This is carried out with much less ceremony than the virgin marriage. Men may see a divorced woman they like and simply send a friend who asks if she would like to marry. Or the men may begin an affair with her, give her market money once a week just as he would a wife, and then during this time decide whether or not he and this woman should proceed towards a marriage. Such liaisons are considered formally to be illegal extramarital relations, but in everyday life they are tolerated as a form of courtship. Harsh approbation is directed toward sexual relations by a man with another man's wife. Thus although a very few men claim to remain chaste in their relations with a divorced woman, most men agree that there is nothing seriously the matter with a discreet affair with such a person.

As Muslims the Kanuri also think of marriage as a relationship involving more or less *purdah*, or wifely confinement within the household. Generally, it is made quite clear before the marriage begins just how much constraint the husband expects. And for the most part such restrictions are positively related to the class and status of the husband. Thus the higher the status of the husband, the greater the probability of almost total confinement on the part of the wife. Certainly all Kanuri men would like their wives to remain inside the compound, however very few can afford to insist. To do so necessitates that there must be a well inside the compound, enough wealth so that the husband does not require the wife's work in the fields, and enough help so that he can send a male servant or client along with her on the few occasions when it becomes absolutely necessary for her to go out.

The Kanuri themselves categorize a few other forms of marriage on the basis of the relations already existing between the partners, or being set up by the marriage. They speak of cousin marriage, marriage with a religious practitioner, marriage with a wealthy or powerful person (a marriage of pleasure) as varieties of unions. They also mention the possibility of the sororate (marriage with a person called sister by one's dead wife) and the levirate (marriage by the younger brother of his dead brother's wife or wives). These latter are quite rare, and I have only recorded one case of the levirate in the last ten years, and none of the sororate. Kanuri think marriage with wife's sister, or person she calls sister while she is still

611 centralized the political system the greater the tendency seems
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182 to be for the corporate strength of descent groups to be reduced or for such corporate groups to be non-existent."[1] This is particularly apt in describing the Kanuri. Fortes states that the Nupe, the Zulu and the Hausa exemplify this. Culturally, the Kanuri share a good deal with both the Nupe and the Hausa, who are also Sudanic state-societies influenced by Islam, and this similarity extends to their social organization as well. In fact, the Kanuri represent the most extreme development of these features, for whereas among both the Nupe and the Hausa patrilineal lineages and sibs are reported the Kanuri are clearly bilateral in descent, and do not have corporate kin groups at all.

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595 The most important social unit determined by kinship is
000 the nuclear or the polygamous family. Consequently, this section will be concerned with a discussion of marriage, residence, the family and the household. Other aspects of social organization which are not based on kinship, such as the class structure, will be discussed separately.

1. Marriage.

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• 587 It may seem curious to begin a section on marriage with a statement about divorce; nevertheless it is important to note at the start that the Kanuri divorce frequently, commonly, and

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1. Meyer Fortes. "The Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups," American Anthropologist, 55, No. 1 (1953), p. 26.

586 with ease. Since most men marry a number of times in the course
• 587 of a normal life, they are likely to marry women who have been married previously and whose earlier marriage (or marriages) has ended in divorce. An important distinction is made between a marriage with a girl who has never been married before, and marriages with women who have been married previously.

585 a) Marriage with a virgin. The adult Kanuri woman wears
302 her hair in a striking coiffure which resembles a Trojan helmet. Adolescent girls who have not yet married wear their hair in totally different fashion. Their hair-do is divided into three parts, and they are referred to as kalə yaskə, a term for their particular developmental stage which derives from the hair-do that characterizes the stage. Since very high priority is placed on virginity for a girl before marriage, a first marriage with a kalə yaskə is equivalent to marriage with a virgin.

584 Marriages are frequently arranged, but consent of both boy and girl plays a part, even in marriages in which the boy is marrying for the first time and the girl is a kalə yaskə. A boy may come to his father to say that he likes a particular girl. It frequently happens then that the boy's father will go to the house of the father of the girl, bringing presents with him, to arrange the marriage. The father of the boy may also select a particular girl as wife for his son, ask the boy if he likes the girl, then make the arrangements with the father of the
[565] girl. A talaka may marry the daughter of a very good family, if he can raise the money needed for her bride-price. The sole

585 virgin, he beats her that night, and proclaims it openly. Both
626 the girl and her mother feel shame; the husband, in turn, feels that he has been defrauded and has gotten a bad bargain. The fugurum money, however, is not repaid him. Though the Kanuri know that the hymen may be removed surgically, and that the Arabs do do this in order to make the wedding night less painful to the bride, they never do it themselves; the hymen is always forcefully broken.

585 On the following day, friends of the girl come to cook for her and for her husband, and they do this for seven days, while the bride does nothing except bathe and decorate herself while
834 visitors come to greet her. Her husband is permitted to resume having intercourse with her after four days. If he has another wife, he does not sleep with her for those seven days, nor does she cook for him during that period.

b) Marriage with a divorced woman. The above description of marriage practices represents the marriage of a man with a kalə yaskə, described as a virgin, and usually, though not always a virgin. More properly, such a marriage should be called a girl's first marriage, in contrast to subsequent marriages.
586 Should she be divorced, the woman enters a totally different cat-
587 egory in the social structure. She becomes a <u>zogor</u>, and marriage with a zogor is different in many respects from marriage with a kalə yaskə. The status of a man does not change significantly after a divorce, consequently there is no category for a
000 man corresponding to that of the zogor. His first marriage fre-

His first marriage fre-
582 quently is with a kalɔ yaskə, but this is not always the case.
[587] Many young men of poor families marry a zogor when they marry
[556] for the first time. Since polygamy is permitted, and under Islamic law a man may have as many as four wives, men of important and wealthy families take more than one wife, and prefer to marry a kalɔ yaskə each time.

885 It was mentioned that the kalɔ yaskə takes her name from
302 the hair-do worn by girls before maturity. After marriage, with the permission of her young husband, she will have her hair redone according to the style which characterizes an adult woman. Thereafter she is not a kalɔ yaskə; she takes her place with
586 adults. Should she be divorced by her husband, she would re-
885 turn to the protection of her luwali. She is then eligible for marriage once again, though now she approaches the situation as a grown woman, and of course, one who is not inexperienced in sex.
[587] Attitudes attending the marriage of a kalɔ yaskə, and much of the ceremony involved, are no longer appropriate when a zogor marries.

586 A woman who becomes a zogor suddenly finds that she has a great deal of freedom in her behavior. Her luwali, or some older friend or relative, provides her with a room in his household,
[535] and men come to court her. She participates in the frequent outdoor dancing in which only zogors take a part since no self-
584 respecting husband would permit his wife to dance publicly. An
587 unmarried man enters into a relationship with a zogor which
[431] ideally should end in their marriage. If he is not already married, he comes to visit the zogor regularly, bringing her presents of clothing and jewelry. It is accepted that a man court-

It is accepted that a man court-
586 ing a zogor has sex relations with her. The zogor differs
836 from a prostitute, who takes money from each man who has sex
584
587 relations with her. Prostitutes are known, and the practice
548 of prostitution is abhorred; zogors exist everywhere as a nat-
831 ural part of Kanuri social organization. The zogor does not receive payment for her services, nor does she ever receive several men in one night, a characteristic of prostitution which the Kanuri particularly single out as repellent to them. A zogor regularly is visited by the same man for a period of weeks. Ideally, this ends in marriage; however, if they find themselves incompatible the relationship is terminated and someone else comes to court the zogor, while the man enters into a
626 new relationship with another zogor. A woman who prolongs her status as a zogor for several years, because she enjoys the freedom which is permitted a zogor, or because she enjoys the attentions of many men without the responsibilities of marriage, begins to be thought of as a loose woman by the community. Few men would marry such a woman because such a marriage would not be expected to last.

595 Should a man have one wife and wish to marry a second, a zogor, he would begin to pay attention to the zogor. Noticing this, his first wife might become jealous, and might ask him, "What are you doing talking to that zogor?" Should he answer that he wishes to marry her, the issue is settled, as it is perfectly reasonable for a man to contemplate taking a second wife. However, attitudes towards a second wife vary among Kanuri wom-

595 en, depending on a number of factors, and the husband would wish to determine his first wife's feeling on the subject before proceeding further. He might also want to examine his own feelings toward his first wife, should the possibility arise that she might refuse to accept a second wife in the household.

[537] Unlike the unmarried man, a married man is not supposed to sleep with a zogor before marrying her, since that would be adultery.

• 587 A man wishing to marry a zogor discusses the matter with her. If the marriage is acceptable to her, he pays the luwaliram money directly to her. Luwaliram for a zogor is much less than for a kalə yaskə. Whereas all marriages with a kalə yaskə involve the payment of sədagu, many marriages of a man with a zogor leave out the sədagu. Məri payment on marrying a zogor is no more than two or three shillings.

The husband-to-be buys kola nuts (goro) which he will distribute, while his wife-to-be begins buying and grinding millet which she will take with her to her new home. A zogor may buy six to eight shillings worth of millet which she pounds and grinds, and other foodstuffs such as wheat, rice, salt and pepper to take with her, but she brings less food to the new home than does a kalə yaskə.

The marriage ceremony itself is the same as that held when a kalə yaskə marries. Both husband and wife have a luwali who is responsible, in a sense, for the conduct of that person. The wedding takes place in the morning, and that evening women friends

587 of the wife, in numbers, bring her clothing and belongings through the streets to her new husband's home. Later that night the bride herself comes, accompanied by her very close friend (kususu). There is no ceremony corresponding to that which takes place when a virgin marries. The following day, her friends cook the morning meal for her. After that, she cooks her own food. A man with a previous wife who marries a zogor will [595] sleep with his new wife for three consecutive days. After the three initial days, he spends one night with each wife in regular rotation, as is the normal practice of a man with more than one wife.

589 Bachelors are very rare. The primary informant in this [115] area, Ya Mogorom, a woman of about fifty who is herself a grandmother several times, could not think of a single adult male who had never married, though she said that it did occasionally occur. Spinsters are just as rare, and Ya Mogorom could name only a sixteen year old girl who was not yet married as an ex-
583 ample of an adult female who had never married. Common-law
836 marriages as such do not occur. A woman living with a man but not married to him is his nəmgəmtəm, and is quite distinct from
587 his wife as she never cooks for him. Until the age of fifty a zogor will remarry; beyond that she does not attempt to remarry. A man will remarry as long as he is able to have intercourse.
581 Sometimes old people marry for convenience, after they can no
887 longer have intercourse. She cooks his food, and he provides her with clothing and other things.

• 587 The levirate among the Kanuri is called fatorongabe. A man must marry the widow of his elder brother (yaga); he is not permitted to marry the widow of his younger brother (kərami). At the death of one's wife, one may marry her younger sister, but one is forbidden to marry her elder sister. This, too, is called fatorongabe.

2. Divorce.

586 779 The Koran has a great deal to say about divorce, particularly in Sura II ("The Cow"), and Sura LXV ("Divorce"). It specifically mentions a waiting period of four months (three full menstrual courses for the woman) to determine if the woman is pregnant before the divorce is final and the woman becomes a zogor. A man may divorce his wife twice and take her back again, but after the third time, she must marry another man before she can remarry her first husband. After the waiting period, the husband cannot maliciously retain his former wife or prevent her from marrying another man. If the husband divorces his wife before the marriage is consummated, but after the bride-price has been settled, half of the bride-price should be paid, unless the husband is released from payment, but it is more proper that the [853] husband should forego it. After a divorce, mothers with nursing children should be permitted to let the children nurse for two whole years, while they are supported by the father of the child.

Kanuri practice concerning divorce operates within the limits dictated by the Koran. The husband divorces his wife by say-

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Table VII
Present Number of Wives

	0	1	2	3	4	concubines	Mean No. of wives
Aristocracy	-	3	2	-	-	1	1.4
Koranic Malams	-	1	2	-	-	-	1.7
Canteen Traders	-	-	3	1	2	-	2.8
NA Malams	-	3	3	-	-	1	1.5
Kabuna	1	1	4	-	-	-	1.5
Craftsmen	-	4	2	-	-	-	1.3
Talaka	1	7	-	-	-	-	.88
Low-status	1	3	-	-	-	-	.75
Total no.	3	22	16	1	2	2	

that the canteen traders have significantly more wives as a group, while the talaka and the low status individuals have significantly fewer wives. Among the canteen traders are found the only two individuals who have four wives; among the talaka and the low status individuals none have more than one wife and two do not have any.

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The many differences between marrying a kalə yaskə (virgin) and a zogor (divorced woman) have been discussed at some length. Table VIII presents data on the percentage of zogor and kalə yaskə among the present wives of individuals in the sample. Under a (Present Wives) it can be seen that the first four categories have married predominantly kalə yaskəs while the bottom four have overwhelmingly married zogors. The cultural ideal is for a young man to marry a kalə yaskə at his first marriage. Most individuals in each of the eight categories have in fact

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 201]

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Table VIII

Whether Marriage was with a Kalə Yaskə or a Zogor

	a. Present wives		b. First wife		c. All previous wives	
	kalə yaskə	zogor	kalə yaskə	zogor	kalə yaskə	zogor
Aristocracy	6	1	5	---	16	10
Koranic Malams	5	-	3	-	10	-
Canteen Traders	12	5	4	2	19	19
NA Malams	7	2	3	3	15	16
Kabuna	1	7	4	2	7	31
Craftsmen	1	7	4	2	5	38
Talaka	-	7	5	3	6	64
Low-status	-	3	1	2	2	22
Totals:	32	32	29	14	80	200

[GEIDAM]

582 done this (see b - First wife), so that twice as many first
587 marriages (29) were with kalə yaskəs than with zogors (14).
565 On the other hand, in the many subsequent marriages into which
554 the members of this sample entered (see c - All previous wives),
463 many more were with zogors (200) than with kalə yaskəs (80).
It is evident that talaka and low status individuals tend overwhelmingly to marry zogors after their initial first marriage since of subsequent marriages only two were with kalə yaskəs, while eighty-one were with zogors. On the other hand, the four upper categories tend to marry kalə yaskəs more frequently than
[792] zogors. This is particularly striking for the category of Koranic Malams, all of whose ten marriages have been with kalə
[163] yaskəs. This is significant because, as will be noted below, the Koranic Malams are blessed with many children while other people have relatively few.

593 Table IX presents data on the seclusion of wives. The
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Table IX

Whether wife is secluded (kule)

	kule	partly kule	not kule
Aristocracy	4	1	-
Koranic malams	2	1	-
Canteen Traders	6	-	-
NA Malams	6	-	-
Kabuna	1	1	3
Craftsmen	-	-	6
Talaka	1	-	6
Low-status	-	-	3
Totals:	20	3	18

607 Informants
[587] say that marriage with a dead wife's sister is a possibility and some called it a "good thing", but no such unions were ever recorded [601] in the field. To jokingly call Wi-To-Sis, "wife" carries an implication of the present wife's death, and such joking is stringently avoided. Exactly the same conditions for the same reasons apply to the joking relations between a woman and her husband's younger brothers. Although the joking takes many forms the most common is for ego to joke about obtaining a sexual and/or a marriage partner for his spouse's younger siblings.

605 [601] There is a joking relationship which takes place between cross-cousins of opposite sex. It takes the following form. Ego (male speaking) jokes with his matrilateral junior cross-cousin of opposite sex, calling her wife, concubine, lover, etc., and she returns the joke calling him slave, husband, lover, etc., and extracting joking money (kungana sulibe) from him on the Sala Laya (roughly the New Year). This brings on a kind of play behaviour with the younger siblings of ego's cousin which follows the adult rules of marriage. That is to say, a joking relation with Wi-To-Siblings who in this case are his junior cross-cousins as well as being his 605 joking-wife's younger siblings. Thus he will call them tiu (junior 601 in-laws) and refer to them (in the situation) as tiunyi (my junior in-laws). Ego may change his joking-wife from time to time if there are many female junior cross-cousins, but he will call only one of them wife at any one time, arranging her younger siblings 605 into tiu (junior in-laws). This follows the adult practice of only [582] marrying one of the available cousins at one time. Given no joking-wife among the matri-kin, ego may go through exactly the same joking

592 However, ego's interests and sense
593 of social membership lie primarily with his agnatic group and are
571 less affected by friendship than social security.
[602]

An example may help to clarify things here. From the genealogical data of four brothers, the following recent family history emerged which, although atypical in its matrilateral emphasis, still illustrates quite graphically how the residence patterns operate through time.

[768] Upon the death of her husband about forty years ago, a woman of Magumeri returned from Nguru in north Bornu in order to live in the compound of her full brother, the head butcher of the town. With her she brought her three sons all of whom had been fathered by
[587] her recently dead husband. She later remarried, leaving the three boys with their Mo-Bro, and subsequently gave birth to another son by the new husband. The three sons of the woman's original marriage grew up in the house of their (childless) Mo-Bro and were taught the butcher's craft.

[463] When the Mo-Bro died leaving no wife, and no heirs, his
[554] sister's oldest son became the head butcher of Magumeri. The second son decided to leave the butcher's craft (a low status occupation) and become a trader in hides and skins. The youngest of the three full brothers, who was crippled in one leg, elected to remain in butchering. The eldest son became head of the household. He married and prospered and now has two wives and three children (by the second wife). The second also married and set up a new compound for himself on the east side of and adjacent to his elder brother's compound. Later, the third brother married and after a short while moved directly to the north and adjacent to his elder brother's compound.

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584 encouraged to increase his bridewealth offer and also to increase his kwororam gifts to the girl's grandmother (she had no mother in the compound) in order to increase his chances of acceptability. Only after enlarging his offer and his kwororam before witnesses did the anxious suitor discover that he was the victim of a ruse, and that there was no other bidder for the girl.

The kwororam is not considered part of the bridewealth within this present discussion or by the Kanuri themselves because it is not necessarily returnable by the girl's family if the arrangements proceed no further. It is therefore exactly what its name implies, a fee or set of gifts given for the privilege of asking and smoothing out any opposition from female relatives to the future negotiations between the girl's guardian and the would-be suitor.

The kwororam applies only to non-preferential virgin marriages. It is not practised in cousin marriage because these unions are arranged
587 years before they are consummated. In non-virgin marriage the money and
[836] gifts which the man gives to the woman while he is sleeping with her, as a divorced woman, serve instead as the initiatory behaviour which may or may not lead to marriage. The man may also give small gifts of some cloth, soap, perfume, or other women's sundries to any senior female relative of the divorced woman, especially if she is quite a young girl or woman who values her elder's opinion.

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584 The Kanuri recognize that this practice has the utility of allowing some time to elapse while the parties prepare to go more deeply and seriously into creating the marriage relationship.

If there has been a kwororam, the luwaliram occurs one to three months afterwards. This payment is the largest single amount given by the male (with the aid of his supporters) to the female's group. It

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584 portion of the money for himself.. The pattern emphasises the patri-
602 lateral group, especially the relatives living in close association with the luwali who are often as not his agnates. However, the girl's mother, her mother's brother and her mother's own parents, if present or nearby, always receive a small part of the luwaliram.

587 With increased age and number of divorces, marriages become more and more an individual matter between the male and the female participants and the woman tends to take over the luwaliram payment for herself. She may be living with relatives at the time who often serve as her intermediaries and collect the payments for her. In this case she gives them a small amount of the luwaliram payment.

584 With the completion of the luwaliram payment the final ar-
585 rangements for the marriage are settled by the parties. The day of the wedding is set in the period of the next few weeks as well as the place of formalization and the price of the sada'a, or second and final payment of the bridewealth. During the time of the luwaliram payments the man tries to iron out the details of the wedding party. How many drummers will there be? How many people are coming (if the girl lives in another town)? What will be the means of conveyance for her and her dowry to the house of the groom? Will many of the wedding party besides the girl's mother stay for the one week confinement period (if she is a virgin)? A score of such questions and decisions about them are usually discussed and agreed upon at this time.

584 If the marriage does not take place after the payment of the
1091 luwaliram, generally speaking it can be expected that litigation of some kind will result. If the man breaks it off himself, then the girl's family (or the woman) usually feel aggrieved and try to keep some or even all of the payment. Contrarily, if the girl's family breaks off the wedding,

the aid of magical devices.

Besides the greater elaboration and expense of a virgin marriage it is also distinguished by the delivery of the woman's dowry (larusa) to the groom's compound the day after the wedding. In non-virgin marriages the dowry is brought with the woman on the wedding night. This is due to the necessity of proving the virgin status of the young girl. Her material goods cannot be brought over to the husband's house until the terms of the contract are acclaimed as valid. If her virginity is questionable on the marriage night, then a litigation either in or out of court begins, wherein her status as a virgin must be re-assessed and the entire marriage arrangement re-evaluated. The whole community is witness to this validation since the successful deflowering is made public in the middle of the night or early morning by a procession of women of both families, friends and neighbours, who go round the town beating enamel basins, with a drummer in the lead. This serves as an announcement of the marriage consummation and of the discovery of the girl's virgin status by her husband. If there is no procession every one knows something is amiss. Among more traditional families, the groom announces the successful test by emerging from his hut immediately after defloration to shoot a gun into the air.

The second classification of marriage is the kanu gwojin (he takes a woman) which means marrying a woman who has already been married before and is now divorced. There is a great deal of variation in the initiation of such a marriage, but as a general rule it is carried on with much less ceremony and a far greater degree of individual choice is exercised by the couple themselves. This freedom increases with age as well as being more common for all ages (except first marriages) among the lower ranks of society. As a man and woman grow older they demand

As a man and woman grow older they demand 582
and are given progressively more independence of choice in all matters [561]
including marriage. This is more likely among the peasants. For here 587
second marriages are not as likely to be used as mechanisms for creating, 565
strengthening and maintaining relationship by the girl's luwali to whom 557
it is traditional to return on the occasion of divorce. It is more
likely that the upper class woman will come under the power and author-
ity of her luwali in subsequent marriages than the lower class person who
is left freer to make her own liaisons. The upper class woman although [589]
not in purda during her divorced status must be much more delicate and
restrained about her movements. This necessity to maintain an appear-
ance of probity lends itself more easily to the manipulation of the upper
class woman by her luwali after her first one or two divorces than does
the relative freedom of the lower class woman. Among all classes an
extremely young divorcee of under fifteen is almost sure to have little
freedom of choice for her second husband, although cases of such early
divorce are rare.

During the harvest season (November to February) divorced 581
women (gower) are more serious about trying to pin down one of the tem- [585]
porary liaisons to marriage. Men at this season are similarly inclined [221]
but tend to shop around a little before settling on one choice, unless
their minds were made up before the harvest season opened. With a few [595]
exceptions (notably female) both sexes consider married status desirable
and for a man, having two wives is better than having one. The excep- [589]
tions to this rule are women who are either very attractive to men and
thus enjoy themselves economically and sexually as unmarried women, and/
or women who refuse to give up their independence for marriage. These
factors are often related and as we shall see there is room for the ex-
pression of all of them within marriage. Men marry if their harvest 600

583 Men marry if their harvest
587 money holds out longer than their shopping, and their aspirations fit their resources. Generally speaking men can obtain a wife within their price range. The variation in expense for marriage with a divorced woman is large, but is lower than a virgin marriage at any one level in the society. The entire affair can cost as low as two to four pounds ($5.60 to $11.20 in 1955-7) or approximately 11% of the smallest annual income recorded (twenty-seven pounds in cash and kind). The number of times a woman has been married and her class status determine the extent of the
587 bridewealth. One informant, a man of about 33, married a woman of similar age. The entire bridewealth did not exceed four pounds in value even though the woman was fairly "well-connected". Her father's brother, with whom she was visiting at the time of the marriage, was a court official in the District Headquarters, and she herself was an urban woman. The informant stated that the bridewealth was to be very small because, "She had been used very much", i.e. she had been married and divorced many times. This meant that her services and favours had been granted to many others, and that she was prone to this kind of behaviour. Thus, no very good assurances could be given from past performances that the projected marriage would last very long (the informant divorced her five and a half months after the wedding). Therefore no great investment in her as wife could be made.

581 Men desire wives primarily for their cooking and food-producing skills, although other factors such as culturally prescribed propriety, sexual abilities, personality attributes, family background etc. all play a part in the choice of any particular woman. Some men also claimed that they would prefer to marry high ranking, rather than wealthy women, if forced to choose between these two qualities. Women generally replied in the reverse, i.e. they would prefer to marry wealthy rather

582 In almost half the cases of cousin marriages recorded they are first marriages for the man. On the other hand it is quite rare, female speaking, for cousin marriage to be anything but a first marriage. 582 This is due to the usual method of inception in which the girl is promised as a small child to the boy at his circumcision. 584 If the young girl [304] is given to the boy and comes to live with him in his compound then he is more in the position of guardian to her, or adoptive father, and marriage does not result. If the girl remains in her own compound, or in others, the boy may marry her. In either case he has the primary rights of marriage dispensation over her from that time on. One informant described his own experience with the girl he was just about to marry in the following terms:

582 584 304 881 When I was kaja (circumcised) the girl was given to me; she was only eighteen or nineteen months old at that time; she had been weaned about one month. When I was kaja, they gave me a spear, a watch, a ring, a sword, many robes, and a fine hat (the informant is the eldest son of a well established Village Head). Then my abagana (Fa-Yo-Bro) came and said, "Stand up". We were thirty-five kaja boys at that time, all clothed and taken care of by my father; my father has many chu'una (namesakes). (The informant means here that his father had given each of the boys a robe, he also means that some of the thirty-five boys were being totally supported by his father). My father's mother sat very close to me; she raised me as a child. She said, "Do not stand up for your abagana (Fa-Yo-Bro) unless he gives you his girl." All my family and friends came and brought many gifts. Then my abagana came and put two pounds into my pocket, and said, "Stand up", and I said to him, "No you must finish our custom." After a while he said to me, "I give my girl Palmatta to you". Then my father's mother said, "We agree with you, and she is now our girl."

Today this custom can be practised any time after the circumcision by mutual agreement of the parties involved, although traditionally it is supposed to be carried out at the circumcision.

587 In the one case observed of a non-virgin cousin marriage the 567 informant was a slave of very low status who had married a divorced woman [593] who was his Mo-Bro-Da (she was not a slave). The woman was extremely

587 independent and dominated the marriage completely. A situation she
567 found easier because of her cousin's low status and his general tim-
593 idity as a person.

582 One of the primary functions of cousin marriage is its maintenance and strengthening of already existing relationships. One informant exemplified this generalization by saying that he wanted to practise cousin marriage because the girl was his kèrami (younger sibling), the dauther of his Fa-Ol-Bro. Therefore she would never tell embarrassing things about him or complain of him outside his own group. This results from the fact that her agnatic relations, to whom she
[602] would presumably gossip, are his as well. In other words, by contracting this kind of marriage the informant was avoiding any intimate relations with an agnatic group other than his own, and he liked the idea. All informants agreed upon the tougher texture of such marriages. One informant explained that he was marrying his cousin (his Fa-Bro-Da) so that he could maintain close relations to his parents with whom he had
[606] ceased to live. He said that his father, although he could ordinarily never enter a hut alone with his son's wife, could now do so because she was also his brother's daughter. The same thing occurs in other marriage taboos with in-laws. Thus the restrictions on marriage behaviour are relaxed, and the total amount of interaction among the affines is much greater and friendlier while no new relationships are created.

581 In practice, although universal lip-service is paid to the
582 desirability of cousin marriage, its low incidence indicates its low popularity among a majority of the people.(1) In discussing the matter

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(1) The nature of cousin marriage contraction, i.e. at puberty ceremonies, plus the fact that it is mostly from older men that records of cousin marriages are obtained, suggests that this custom has been declining in practice in the last two decades.

582 557 For example, in 1930 the District Head of Nobber, who was in grave danger of being dismissed from his position by the British, contracted a marriage with a daughter of the Wazirí of Bornu.(1) This was his own way, the Kanuri way, of attempting to strengthen his waning political position in the State. He felt that a marriage link between himself and the household of the Wazirí would make it more difficult for the higher powers to dispose of him, and would enlist the aid of the Wazirí, the second most powerful man in the Kanuri political organisation, on his behalf. The British administration, however, did not take into account the feelings of fathers-in-law for sons-in-law(2) when judging political performance, and so the manoeuvre was in the end to no avail.

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The nyia kam rukatabe can also refer to a marriage which is initiated purely for the sake of marrying a woman or a girl, whose attachment to ego will obviously profit him economically. She is often wealthy herself, or is a wealthy heiress. Thus a high ranking person was observed to spend a great deal of money (this might almost be termed an"investment") for a virgin girl who was the only heir of a rich old man of lower social rank to himself. Informants described this as a true nyia kam rukatabe (marriage with a rich man's girl).

582 587 557 565 By their very nature marriages of this variety are more commonly of the virgin type. However, young girls who divorce and return to the households of their luwali, as tradition prescribes, very often can be utilized for such marriages in their second or possibly even third unions. . Since high ranking women are more often in seclusion there is a greater probability that successive dispensations after div-

(1) See above; chap. III,
(2) The official records do not give the actual biological linkage of the girl to the Wazirí, and it is therefore impossible to tell what kind of a ward she was in the Wazirí's household.

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587 orces can be made of them, since they more often feel compelled to
557 return to the partial seclusion of their luwali's compound, especially
565 during their younger years. Consequently, those in higher ranks not only command higher prices for the girls they dispense, both materially and in terms of social obligations, but get more chance to dispense the same girl, given the high divorce rate. The lower class girl very often wants much more freedom in her marriage choices after her first divorce than the high ranking woman. Thus class differences make for a higher proportion of "investment material" (i.e. dispensable women) for creating obligations where they are needed most, among the upper ranks of society. It should also be remembered that upper class households tend to be larger and thus in both absolute numerical as well as in terms of more utilization being made of the same girl, the high status individual can obtain "higher returns" (more obligations and relationships) from his rights of dispensation.

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793 Nyia sada'abe - marriage of charity or gift marriage[1] is similar in many respects to the foregoing except that the person receiving the girl or young woman (more often a virgin girl) is always a mallam (Koranic teacher-priest). Informants claim that such a marriage is considered to be a charitable act (sada'a) and confers honour upon the
582 donor. In such cases much, if not all, of the gift giving by the male
793 to the girl and her kin before the marriage is waived, except that in
583 connection with the formalizing ceremony on the day of marriage. To what extent the bridewealth is excluded varies from case to case depending upon the wealth or poverty, and power of the mallam in question, and

(1) c.f. Ellison, R.E. op. cit. He calls this nyia mallambe - a marriage with a mallam. This expression was heard, although informants preferred the term used here.

58 little sweetheart and keep her until he (the informant) was grown adult enough to have her as a wife for himself. Because the bridewealth was in the range of X's family resources, X's parents decided, after having the idea suggested to them by the informant, to obtain the informant's "intended" for their son. Needless to say, they knew nothing of the informant's long term plan to marry the girl eventually himself. When the informant was nineteen or twenty, his little childhood girl friend divorced X and married him. The informant did not know whether X ever managed to marry the girl of his own childhood dreams, but thinks he did.

58 183 This rather extreme example is interesting for its illustration of how individuals growing up within a certain social structure can often work out arrangements whereby they skirt round the requirements of their culture, yet manage to maintain the system as a set of rules. The Kanuri recognize that all marriages cannot simply be lasting agreements made between groups of individuals comprised almost entirely of males, especially in Bornu where divorce is so simple and all relationships have a brittle edge.

• 587 The final stage in independence is reached in the last variety of marriage, aɲia kolatabe (marriage of discovery), which by its very nature is confined to non-virgin women. This is the most widespread form of marriage among the population, becoming common after the woman has had her first divorce (or second in some high ranking households). Informants claimed that in this type of marriage, "There is no arrangement, you only meet the woman somewhere and decide to marry her." [[71]] Some Kanuri equated it with the Hausa tsintuna or propertyless marriage, i.e. where the kin are not involved either in the decision to marry or the exchange of property. There is, however, a bridewealth payment by the husband-to-be which is paid to the woman herself, and the marriage is still solemnized at a sada'ɨ ceremony as at all weddings.

587 562 is still solemnized at a sada'è ceremony as at all weddings. With her growing freedom in life a woman exerts a progressively stronger independence in her marriage choices. It was observed (but not measured) that the rate at which this occurs in the life span of women is increasingly rapid as one descends the socio-economic scale, and increases as well with the number of divorces per woman.

567 595 To complete the discussion of types of sexual unions, it might be well to digress slightly at this point to include a brief description of concubinage. A concubine (chir) is a female slave who obtains this status as a result of her birth as a daughter to a male slave (karliya); once having been ascribed the role of chir by her birth she is groomed for a life concubinage. She is considered part of the household property, the inheritable property of the agnatic lineage of her father's owner. She may be given away as a gift to someone (without a wedding) or she can be kept in the family of her father's master. Formerly she could be sold. Once she is sexually mature she is available sexually only to her master unless her master gives her permission to marry someone, for example, another of his slaves. Any children she has as a result of union with a free man, i.e. her master, are themselves free, for slave status is determined by that of the father. This means that the slave population in Bornu is reproducing itself only through the efforts of functioning male slaves who are producing children.

A concubine is primarily a sexual partner to her master and a mark of his high status. She is also a servant to her owner's wife who may use her to do household work, carry water, etc. In several cases slave owners told of using both male and female slaves for farm labour. There are no rules governing sexual intercourse with concubines as there

1. Age Differences

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It is much simpler for the male to exercise control over the behaviour of very young girls, especially the young virgins of nine to thirteen years, when they are first married. This is another reason for the attractiveness of virgin marriage, for in this situation, the cultural ideal of male dominance is most possible. To a lesser extent because of the operation of other factors, large age differences between husband and wife, when the husband is the elder, make his dominant role more accessible. This is due to the general respect given to age in the society and may be one of the reasons behind the value placed upon the union of a man to a woman who is younger than himself.

2. Number of Marriages

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As a woman increases the number of her divorces and experiences progressively more independence and freedom in her zower (divorced woman) status, it becomes more and more difficult for her to assume the submissive role required of her by her culture. As we have seen the amount a male is willing to pay for a woman decreases with the number of her past divorces, for he knows she has not had a past history of long term submission to one man, but rather a series of marriages which were broken by some disagreement between her and her husband. The number of her past divorces indicates her willingness in the past to break the marriage rather than submit to her husband's will or it represents her husband's dissatisfaction with her behaviour, which also points to her inability to conform to the cultural ideal of wifely virtue. Thus the number of divorces a woman has contracted is both a measure of her desire for independence and also a stimulus to the development of more independence, rather than submissiveness.

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888 592 183 economic security for many men who are unable to achieve the more highly valued position of respected senior member of a compound in their old age.

Inheritance

428 The rules followed in inheritance are those of Maliki law,(1) and these are codified rules upheld in the courts when succession cases [613] are heard. In general property should remain within the agnatic lineage with preference given to seniority or linearity and male sex. The surviving male always receives two parts to every one given to the surviving female of equal relationship to the deceased. A wife is considered when a man has no children. She and her co-wives (if present) are entitled to one-third of the warata (inheritance) of her (their) dead husband, while the remaining two-thirds goes to the agnatic group. Thus, if a man has four wives and no children each is entitled to a fourth of the wife's third, i.e. one-twelfth of the estate. For wives this means in practice only a share of the movables, excluding land-use rights and the household immovables. If there are children a wife is not entitled by law to any of the inheritance, although it is customary to give her a gift of money if she is being [587] sent away from her dead husband's house by the surviving agnates. If none of the male children are her own then she has no longer any living connection with her husband's family unless she marries a brother, which is known but not practised. When a son is very young the closest brothers of the deceased, in order of seniority, get the largest portion of the inheritance and act as father to the surviving children. If a senior brother of the deceased survives him he must

(1) See Ruxton F.H., Maliki Law, 1916 (London).